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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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R 240930Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8690

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 6750

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, LE, SY

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF ALLON ON LEBANESE SITUATION

1. I MET WITH ALLON OCTOBER 27 IN PURSUANCE OF OUR AGREEMENT TO MAINTAIN A DIALOGUE ON THE LEBANESE SITUATION. ALLON SAID HE WISHED AT THE OUTSET TO CONVEY TO US THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF INTELLIGENCE: A) ISRAELIS UNDERSTAND THAT PIERRE GEMAYEL PLANS TO VISIT U.S. IN NEAR FUTURE, PRESUMABLY TO SEEK POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR THE PHALANGE AMONG LEBANESE ON EAST COAST; B) THE TWO SYRIAN ARMY UNITS FORMERLY HEADING TOWARD TRIPOLI FROM ALEPPO HAVE BEEN DIVERTED TOWARD THE SOUTH; C) ISRAELIS UNDERSTAND THAT THE MARONITES ARE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE PERMANENCE OF ANY CEASE-FIRE ARRANGEMENT AND EXPECT THAT PARTITION OF LEBANON WILL BE THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION TO THE CURRENT CRISIS.

2. CONCERNING THE DIVERSION OF THE TWO SYRIAN UNITS, ALLON ADDED THAT PARADOXICALLY HE WAS RELIEVED THAT THEY WERE DIVERTED TO THE SOUTH WHERE THEY REPRESENT A THREAT TO ISRAEL SINCE ANY INFILTRATION OF SYRIAN ARMED FORCES INTO LEBANON WOULD PROBABLY FORCE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TO DECIDE ON SOME FORM OF ISRAELI REACTION.

3. COMMENTING ON ISRAELI TACTICS IN CONTEXT OF CURRENT LEBANESE SITUATION, ALLON SAID THAT WHILE RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY ISRAELI SPOKESMAN (PRINCIPALLY BY ALLON HIMSELF) HAD BEEN BOTH TIMELY AND EFFECTIVE, THERE SEEMS TO BE

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GENERAL AGREEMENT AMONG CABINET MEMBERS THAT THERE SHOULD

BE NO FURTHER PUBLIC STATEMENTS UNLESS THE SITUATION RADICALLY CHANGES. ALLON FEELS THE SYRIANS HAVE MONITORED VERY CAREFULLY WHAT ISRAELIS HAVE BEEN SAYING AND HAVE ADJUSTED THEIR ACTIONS IN SUCH A WAY AS TO MINIMIZE THE POSSIBILITY OF AN UNWANTED CONFRONTATION WITH ISRAEL OVER EITHER LEBANON OR THE GOLAN. HE ALSO SAID THE LEADERSHIP HAS AVOIDED DEBATING THE LEBANESE SITUATION IN CABINET MEETINGS BECAUSE OF THE DANGER OF LEAKS WHICH COULD FURTHER INFLAME THE SITUATION IN LEBANON.

4. I THEN SUGGESTED TO ALLON THAT WE DISCUSS POSSIBLE ISRAELI ATTITUDES TOWARD VARIOUS CONTINGENCIES THAT MIGHT DEVELOP IN LEBANON IN THE NEAR FUTURE. I OUTLINED AS POSSIBLE SCENARIOS THE INTRODUCTION OF SYRIAN ARMED FORCES, THE DISPATCH OF AN INTER-ARAB FORCE EITHER FOR OBSERVATION OR OPERATIONAL PURPOSES, A LEFTIST COUP, AND PARTITION OF LEBANON. ALLON MADE THE FOLLOWING REMARKS REGARDING THE VARIOUS SCENARIOS.

5. IN THE EVENT OF OVERT SYRIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION, THE ISRAELI REACTION WOULD DEPEND ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES AT THE TIME; THE NATURE OF THE INTERVENTION, I.E., WHETHER FULL-SCALE OR LIMITED; THE APPARENT SYRIAN INTENTION, I.E., WHETHER TO CRUSH THE MARONITE CHRISTIANS OR SIMPLY TO IMPOSE ORDER; AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA IN WHICH THE INTERVENTION MIGHT BE MADE. ALLON MADE CLEAR THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO FORECAST ISRAELI REACTION IN THE ABSTRACT SINCE IT WOULD BE DETERMINED BY THE CONFIGURATION OF THESE VARIOUS FACTORS. IT WAS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE BOTH A FULL DEBATE IN THE CABINET AND PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH THE UNITED STATES BEFORE ANY ACTION OF A MILITARY NATURE IS UNDERTAKEN BY ISRAEL. ALLON SAID HE ASSUMED THAT SUCH CONSULTATION WOULD BE TWO-WAY AND THAT WE WOULD INFORM ISRAEL IN ADVANCE OF ANY MOVEMENTS--POLITICAL OR OTHERWISE--THAT WE MIGHT CONTEMPLATE IN DEALING WITH THE LEBANESE CRISIS. I TOLD ALLON THAT I THOUGHT THIS WAS A FAIR ASSUMPTION.

6. WITH REGARD TO AN INTER-ARAB FORCE, ALLON SAID THAT HE DOUBTED WHETHER SUCH A FORCE WOULD BE INTRODUCED IN VIEW OF

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SYRIAN OPPOSITION AS REFLECTED BY ITS REFUSAL TO ATTEND THE CAIRO CONFERENCE. BUT IF THE IDEA SHOULD PROVE ACCEPTABLE TO THE SYRIANS, THE ISRAELI REACTION WOULD BE LARGELY GUIDED BY THE MARONITE CHRISTIAN VIEW. IF THE MARONITES APPROVED (WHICH ALLON FEELS IS ENTIRELY CONCEIVABLE DEPENDING ON THE COMPOSITION OF THE FORCE AND ITS MANDATE), AND IF THE FORCE OPERATES FAR FROM THE ISRAELI BORDER, THEN THE ISRAELIS COULD TOLERATE ITS INTRODUCTION INTO

LEBANON.

7. WITH REGARD TO PARTITION, THE ISRAELIS WOULD BE HAPPY TO HAVE A BENIGN CHRISTIAN STATE ON ITS NORTHERN BORDER; THIS IS UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, SINCE MOST CHRISTIANS ARE CONCENTRATED NORTH OF BEIRUT. IN ALLON'S VIEW, THEREFORE, PARTITION IS NOT LIKELY TO BE IN THE ISRAELI INTEREST. AGAIN, HOWEVER, IF THE MARONITES SEEK PARTITION AND IF THE GEOGRAPHIC CONFIGURATION IS NO WORSE THAN IN THE PRESENT SITUATION, ISRAEL COULD PROBABLY LIVE WITH THIS DEVELOPMENT. ALLON ADDED THAT ISRAEL AGREES WITH THE U.S. POSITION THAT PRESERVATION OF THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF LEBANON DESERVES SUPPORT, BUT HE FELT THAT IN THE END THIS MAY NOT BE PRACTICAL.

8. WITH REGARD TO A LEFTIST COUP, ALLON FEELS THIS IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY SINCE IT WOULD TRIGGER A COMMITMENT OF THE LEBANESE ARMY WHICH UP TO NOW HAS BEEN LARGELY NEUTRAL. HE ADDED THAT ISRAEL REGARDS JUMBLATT AS VERY DANGEROUS AND HIS ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE MONITORED.

9. ALLON SAID AS I LEFT THAT HE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ANY INFORMATION WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE CONCERNING THE VISIT OF GEMAYEL TO THE U.S., AS WELL AS ANY OTHER PIECES OF INTELLIGENCE WHICH BEAR ON THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN LEBANON.

10. COMMENT: THIS CONVERSATION, COMBINED WITH OUR PREVIOUS MEETING ON LEBANON, LEFT ME WITH THE CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT ISRAEL WILL NOT TAKE ANY SERIOUS MILITARY MOVES WITHOUT

PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH THE UNITED STATES. MOREOVER, ALLON MADE IT CLEAR THAT ISRAEL WILL NOT TAKE ANY POLITICAL
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ACTION OR MAKE ANY STATEMENTS WHICH MIGHT FURTHER COMPLICATE THE LEBANESE INTERNAL SITUATION OR TRIGGER REACTIONS BY OTHER POWERS, PARTICULARLY SYRIA. WHILE ALLON'S VIEWS OF THE NEED TO PRESERVE THE CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN LEBANON MAY BE DEEPLY INFLUENCED BY HIS OWN PERSONAL BACKGROUND (DURING WWII ALLON WAS ACTIVE WITH THE PALMACH ON THE SYRIAN BORDER IN OPERATIONS IN WHICH THE MORONITES WERE VERY HELPFUL), I FEEL THAT HE REFLECTS FAIRLY ACCURATELY THE ATTITUDE OF THE ISRAELI LEADERSHIP.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, POLICIES, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, POLITICAL SITUATION, CAT-C
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TELAV06750
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P850004-0325
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751022/aaaaattb.tel
Line Count: 164
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 AUG 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <28 NOV 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VIEWS OF ALLON ON LEBANESE SITUATION
TAGS: PFOR, PEPR, IS, LE, SY, (ALLON, YIGAL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006